



September 18, 2017

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Portman,

We write today to applaud your determined effort to fight human trafficking and to endorse your legislation, the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act of 2017, which would go a long way toward cracking down on the use of the Internet by human traffickers to further their reprehensible crimes.

The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) is the singular voice representing every segment of the hotel industry including major chains, independent hotels, management companies, franchisees, REIT's, and bed and breakfasts. Our industry recognizes the vital role that hotels can play in the battle against human trafficking networks and are committed to fulfilling this responsibility. Our focus in confronting trafficking has been to raise awareness within the industry, train hotel employees, and support non-profit organizations, policymakers, and law enforcement in their efforts to combat these terrible crimes.

For example, AHLA funded and developed an online training program specifically geared toward hotel employees in partnership with ECPAT-USA and Polaris. The program teaches hotel workers to recognize signs of trafficking and report suspicious activities to law enforcement. AHLA also issued hotel industry principles on human trafficking to provide guideposts for our member companies and further raise awareness in the industry.

We are continually seeking more effective ways to contribute to society's campaign against trafficking, whether in coordination with organizations like the National District Attorneys Association, or government agencies like the Department of Homeland Security, or other entities within the travel and tourism sector. Your legislation is a crucial step forward in this campaign, and we are proud to support it. We cannot allow traffickers to conduct their operations on the Internet with impunity and your bill is an important step forward. Please let us know how we can be of assistance in your quest to eradicate human trafficking.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Sindors
Senior Vice President